ours so too, that no prosperity can be hoped for without his blessing, and that 'tis in vain to expect his blessing, without the profession and practise of Religion; that a Righteous God will protect, and defend a Righteous people, and that *nothing, but iniquity, can be our ruin.* What then remains, but that we should resolve this day to pursue those things, which make both for our present, and eternal interest, that we express our gratitude to God, and love to our Country, by a practice suitable to that holy Religion we profess, that so our rejoycings, and thanksgivings may not be the work of a day only, but of our lives. This is the way to shew your selves good Subjects, and good Patriots, and such as are really concerned for the good and welfare of your Country. Nay, this is the way to secure Gods presence with you, and engage his good Spirit so to preside over your Counsels, that they shall still tend to the preservation of our Church, and Religion amongst us, and make our *Sion to continue a praise in the earth.* God will then go on to *strengthen* and establish, *what he has wrought for us*, and make one deliverance the pledge, and earnest of another. And *happy is the people that is in such a Case, yea blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.*

Now to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory now and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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F I N I S.

THE

Sin and Danger

OF

Quenching the Spirit.

WITH

Motives and Directions to prevent it.

IN TWO

SERMONS.

By *Joseph Boyse*, Minister of the *Gospel*.

LONDON,

Printed for *Thomas Parkhurst* at the *Bible* and Three *Crowns* in *Cheap-side*. 1691.

ours ſo too, that no proſperity can be hoped for without his bleſſing, and that 'tis in vain to expect his bleſſing, without the profeſſion and practiſe of Religion; that a Righteous God will protect, and defend a Righteous people, and *that nothing, but iniquity, can be our ruin.* What then remains, but that we ſhould reſolve this day to purſue thoſe things, which make both for our preſent, and eternal intereſt, that we expreſs our gratitude to God, and love to our Country, by a practice ſuitable to that holy Religion we profeſs, that ſo our rejoycings, and thankſgivings, may not be the work of a day only, but of our lives. This is the way to ſhew your ſelves good Subjects, and good Patriots, and ſuch as are really concerned for the good and welfare of your Country. Nay, this is the way to ſecure Gods preſence with you, and engage his good Spirit ſo to preſide over your Counſels, that they ſhall ſtill tend to the preſervation of our Church, and Religion amongſt us, and make our *Sion to continue a praiſe in the earth.* God will then go on to *ſtrengthen* and ſtabliſh, *what he has wrought for us*, and make one deliverance the pledge, and earneſt of another. And *happy is the people that is in ſuch a Caſe, yea bleſſed are the people who have the Lord for their God.*

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F I N I S.

(16)

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER.

THE Doctrine of the Trinity is manifeſt in ſeveral Impreſſions on the Creation, and the Government of innocent *Adam*; yet in the Recovery of fallen Man, it's more evident, than in any thing as yet obvious to this lower world.

The Son aſſuming our Nature, makes atonement for ſin, and vindicates the honour of the Creators Law, whilſt he reſtoreth our Felicity and Holineſs as Redeemer; and as a means of inveſting us in the good he purchaſed, brings us to acknowledge and diſtinctly regard the Father, Son, and Spirit, in our Baptiſmal Dedication.

The Holy Spirit (of whom the enſuing Sermons treat,) hath his diſtinct concern in the Eſſentials of this work. He formed and purifyed the Soul and Body, which the eſſential Word was to aſſume, and inhabit; qualifying this embodied Soul with all Graces, far beyond the meaſure of all other created Beings. He is eminently concerned in the Application of Redemption to ſinners; for he inſpired the Inſtruments by whom the Redeemers Law is notifyed to the World. By his powerful Operation the Doctrines and Teſtimony of Chriſt, are confirmed to the ſufficient conviction of the inquiſitive world, in many Miracles; and among others, in introducing the Life of Chriſt into ſo many Apoſtate Sinners ſucceſſively.

The energy of the Word, as a Seed of Life is by him, as active in this vehicle, which were otherwise unapt for such amazing Effects, on so indisposed an Object as a degenerate Soul, especially at that enmity to the Divine Life, and remoteness from unseen things as to any powerful view; which the temper and carriage of all Men left to themselves do indicate.

Every Grace in Man is his Fruit, as the Enlightner and Sanctifier of Souls; and that holy Principle comprehensive of all holy Dispositions possesseth Men, as born of this Spirit; whereby he renders the Soul a delightful habitation unto God, and meet for those Actings and Glory Christ designeth the redeemed to.

The giving this Spirit, or present determining his saving Operations on the Soul, is that means whereby Christ begins that mystical Union, and those happy Relations expressed in various Metaphors; which our believing consent, as the effect of his active Presence consummates: And the abiding Relation of this Spirit to the Soul, as a special worker and maintainer of Grace, is that which is called the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. In like manner, the saving Operations of the Spirit are called his earnest, which with his illuminating of the Soul, to perceive the Conformity of those to the Gospel Rule, and adding power to the decisive Sentence of Conscience in this Matter, constitute the Witness of the Spirit.

This Holy Spirit doth not only at first introduce, and afterwards evidence Grace, but by his influences he actuateth this his own Off-spring; exciting it's Exercise, and adding to it's Measure: In all which re-

spects

spects, tho a renewed Nature die not, because the Spirit doth not totally depart, yet by his recesses it becomes afflictively faint, unactive, and abated in it's self evidencing Lustre. Neither is it unobservable that tho these additional influences are in some sort determinable by the Spirit, as a Sovereign Agent, whence he sometimes surprizeth a careless indispos'd Frame, with marvellous Reviveals, enlarging us in a joyful sense of God's Favour, as well as Strength and Freedom for holy Employs. Yet usually he observeth a fixed Rule, delighting to assist the prepared industrious circumspect Soul, whilst he leaveth the idle careless Christian to bemoan his Darkness and Weakness, under the Spirits withdrawings; His Visits being ordinarily proportioned to our Zeal for them, and meetness to improve them. How needful then is the Subject of these excellent Sermons, which discover the solid judgment and experimental Piety of the Author? the design whereof is to convince thee of this Method of the Spirit, and warn thee against those Forfeitures, which are too common, and so fatal to the comfort and improvement of Believers.

What sad Evidences are we under, that the Quenching of the Spirit is little accounted of? Most Men seem guilty of an offensive Behaviour towards him; the general Temper giveth cause of fear, that this holy Fire burneth less vehemently, than sometimes it was accustomed to do.

Do not we perceive a Spirit of Prayer more remiss, Ordinances less effectual to Conversion or Edification, and the Conversation of Professors attended with less conviction on the Minds of the World, yea filled with such Distempers and Scandals, as are equally a cause and sign of the departure of the Spirit? Which things

are

are so notorious, that I almost despair of a tollerable Aspect on the State of the Church, or a fitness for any great Mercies, before there be a new effusion of this holy Spirit.

Can we then wonder at that levity and unsuccessfulness in all holy Administrations, joined with prophane Practices of such, who are so far degenerated from Christian and Protestant Principles, as to deny and despise the Operations of this holy Spirit? Which comes next, (however it's minded,) to the sin against the Holy Ghost, especially in such who have felt any of it's Workings, and profess to receive him in their Designation to the Office of the Ministry.

But if thou art a Christian indeed, thou art a Person by whom the Spirit witnesseth to the truth of the Scriptures, and that holy Religion, which is a transcript of these sacred Writings on thy own Heart; neither canst thou be unacquainted, how thy vigour in all Duties abates, or improves as the Spirit Communicates or with-holds his influence. Sure thou art not now to be informed, that a Soul may pine away under the greatest helps, when the withdraws of this invisible Agent testifies against thy disobedience to his Motions, or independence on his Operations. He is a stranger to himself, who feels not a darkness on his Evidences, and interruption in his Spiritual Joy, whenever the Spirit is grieved by frequent neglects, or deliberate sins.

Therefore it's thy great concern to govern thy self with that tenderness and caution, as express not only a Conviction that the rule of thy behavior is exact, and the sanction thereof lawful and sure: But that also thy Communion is with this Holy Spirit, who observes

serves and resents thy most hidden dispositon, and evidenceth his approbation or dislike, by what will much affect the flourishing or withering state of thy Soul.

He is not skilful in the methods of God's Government over his People, who knows not that the favour or displeasure of God are not so much expressed in outward Providences, as in the abundant Communications of his Spirit to the Soul, or the abatements thereof. And indeed every Dispensation is more or less conducive to the [illegible] design of the Redeemer, and the best advantages of the Church; as the degrees of the Effusions of the Spirit be. Wherein lay the priviledge of the Gospel-state in its last Edition, but that it is the ministration of the Spirit? This is its Glory, the Spirit of grace operates more under this form than it did in the Jewish Oeconomy, comparatively wherewith (not absolutely) the Mosaical Form was a dead Letter. And it's not to be denyed, that still the gradual advances of Christ's Interests, find these effusions so far appropriated to them, as that less pure administrations become sensibly deserted, as soon as more pure ones considerably obtain in any place.

Hence the happiest state of the Church is reserved for the most eminent pourings out of this Spirit, whereby Knowledge, Love and Holiness will be diffused more extensively as to Places, and Quality of Persons, especially Magistrates; and more intensively as to the degree of those Endowments in such as were before partakers of them. Neither dare I exclude this anointing as a fitness to subserve Providence, in accomplishing the great things described in Prophetick Scriptures, relating to the latter days.

To

To this eminent pouring out of the Spirit, are still ascribed all those excellent Effects: And when I further consider, that Christ left his Spirit to supply his absence, as more advantageous to his Church than his bodily presence: I can hope for greater things from the Spirits more abundant influence, than from Christs bodily appearance in the Air before the day of Judgment, as being far more adapted to Spiritual effects, and that life of Faith, which Believers are to live 'till the heavenly Vision, than a bodily sight of Christ can be.

I shall detain thee no longer from perusing these serious Discourses, which are published not by the Author's purpose, but at the desire of a pious, worthy Gentleman, who procured them from him for his own use. That the Spirit himself would plead his own cause, and dispose thy heart to that well pleasing behaviour towards him, as may be attended with that growing liberty and strength in thy Soul, which cannot be void of the purest Joys; is the earnest Prayer of

Thy Servant,

in the Work of the Gospel,

Daniel Williams.

1 Theſſal. V. 19.

Quench not the Spirit.

WE do ſo entirely depend on the influences of the Holy Spirit, both to form in us the Principles of a holy heavenly Life, and to improve and advance them towards their perfection in life eternal, that this excellent caution of the Apoſtle *Paul*, can never be unſeaſonable. And alaſs! there are but few of us that obſerve the temper of our own Spirits, and their progreſs or declenſion in Holineſs. But we often find thoſe ſad effects of our quenching the Holy Spirit in his receſſes, and the ſuſpenſion of his gracious Aids, that render ſuch a diſſuaſive as this in the Text too neceſſary to us. The Apoſtle amongſt many other excellent Counſels in the foregoing part of the Chapter, adds theſe too, *Pray without ceaſing; in every thing give thanks*, verſ. 17, 18. And becauſe the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit was ſo abſolutely needful, to excite and improve all thoſe Graces in us, which are the very Life and Soul of our Prayers and our Praiſes.

He adds this ſolemn caution in the Text, *Quench not the Spirit.* q. d. Beware of doing any thing that may weaken or extinguiſh the Graces and the Giſts of the Holy Spirit.

This diſſuaſive then of the Apoſtles, I ſhall propoſe as the Subject of your preſent Meditations:

We ſhould all beware of quenching the Spirit.

In proſecution of this Subject, we muſt enquire what we muſt here underſtand by the Spirit, and what by our not quenching the Spirit.

1. *What must we understand by the Spirit?*

Answ. There is no doubt, the Cause is here put for the Effects, or the Holy Spirit, (the blessed God in his third mode of subsistence,) for the product of his Operations on the Souls of Men, his Gifts and Graces.

Sometimes the Spirit denotes those miraculous extraordinary Gifts, which he communicates to Men, of *speaking with Tongues*, of *Healing*, of *Prophecy*, of *Miracles*. Sometimes the ordinary Gifts conveyed to Men in the use of ordinary means, to qualify them for the Duties of that Station and Places which they hold in the Church of Christ, as Members of his mystical Body, that must be mutually useful to each other. See both kinds of Gifts mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 12. 7, 8, 9, &c. *All these worketh, that one and self same Spirit dividing to every Man severally as he will.*

Sometimes the *Spirit* is put for the Effects or Impressions, which his gracious Operations produce in the Souls of Men; especially for those *Graces* or *holy Dispositions*, which he forms and encreases in all the Children of God. Whence he is called the *Spirit of Grace*; and all *holy Dispositions* in us are called his *Fruits*, *Gal.* 5. 22. *Zech.* 12. 10. *Heb.* 10. 29. He is also called the *Holy Spirit*, not so much with respect to his *Essential Purity*, as to his *Sanctifying Influences*, Eph. 4 vers. 30.

Now all these may be justly included here. We must do our utmost to increase and improve all the Gifts or Graces which the Holy Spirit imparts, and must do nothing to abate or extinguish any one of them. The Context justifyes this comprehensive sense. But that leads me to the second

Quest. *What must we understand by this caution, Quench not the Spirit?*

Answ. The word σβέννυτε evidently alludes to that opposite Metaphor, by which the Operations of the *Holy Spirit* are frequently represented under the Emblem of *Fire*.

Jesus Christ is said to baptize with the *Holy Spirit* and with *Fire*, *Mat.* 3. 11. (or with that *Holy Spirit* that is compared to Fire.) Agreeably hereto, when the *Holy Spirit* miraculously

by descended on the Apostles, he assumes the resemblance of Cloven Tongues, *as it were of Fire*, Acts 2. 3. And even in the Writings of the Prophets, he is described as a *Spirit* of *Judgment*, and a *Spirit of Burning*, Isa. 4. 4. And the true Messiah, on the account of his dispensing the *Holy Spirit* is compared to a *Refiner*; the Operations of his Spirit being his *refining Fire*, Mat. 3. 2, 3. And the Emblem is very significant and expressive of the Operations of the Holy Spirit, whose great Office it is to kindle *Rays* of *Divine Light* in our *Minds*, and *Flames* of *Divine Love* in our *Hearts*, even such *Flames* as consume our Lusts, and refine us from the Dross of this Earth, and render us pure and holy in the Eyes of God.

In allusion to this Metaphor, the Apostle cautions us against *quenching the H. Spirit*, against abating or suppressing any Spark of Divine Light or Life, which that Holy Spirit has enkindled in our Minds, against doing any thing to weaken or frustrate the Success of those Influences of the Holy Spirit, whereby he should enlighten, refine, and purify our Souls.

Now to pursue this obvious Allusion, as there are two ways by which Fire is quenched or goes out, either by *neglecting to blow it up*, or by *throwing water upon it*; so we may be said to quench the Holy Spirit, either by *neglecting to improve it's Influences in order to the exciting and actuating our Graces and Gifts*, or by *resisting or counteracting those Influences*.

1. *We may be said to quench the Holy Spirit by not improving his Influences in order to the exciting and actuating those Graces and Gifts, which he communicates to us.*

Fire must be preserved and encreased with a continued Supply of Fuel, and the Flame will go out of it self, if not kept in by our care to blow it up. So should the motions of the Spirit of God be cherisht, and the Flames enkindled in our Hearts, preserved and enlarged by frequent and diligent excitation. There is less expressed in the words, than is intended (according to a very usual Figure,) and *quench not the Spirit*, is as if the Apostle had said, *value and improve all the gracious Operations of the Holy Spirit.*

If he darts any Rays of Knowledge into your Minds, cherish them, and by ſtudy and meditation encreaſe 'em into higher meaſures of Divine Light. If he enkindles any Spark of Divine Life and Love into your Hearts, quicken and blow it up into a holy vigorous Flame.

If he imparts any Gifts that may render you the more capable to diffuſe Divine Light and Life, and Love into the Souls of others, employ 'em with diligence, and emprove 'em with continued and faithful Exerciſe. For thoſe gracious Habits will languiſh and be in danger of expiring, which we do not enliven and encreaſe by frequent renewed Acts: And even thoſe Gifts will be ſenſibly abated and decayed, which holy uſe does not keep up in their due vigour. And we may juſtly fear, leſt the holy Spirit ſuſpend thoſe Influences of his, whereby our Graces ſhou'd be ſtrengthened, and our Gifts enlarged; when we do not thankfully receive 'em, and induſtriouſly emprove 'em by the free concurrence and uſe of our own reaſonable Powers. We cannot expect thoſe Divine Aids to advance us in Holineſs whilſt we ſit down with folded Arms, indulging a wretched ſloath and careleſs indifferency. They are then uſually diſpens'd moſt liberally when we earneſtly implore 'em, when we call up all the Powers of our Souls to our Duty, and are ready to act up to the heighth of thoſe holy Principles formed in us, and of thoſe Impreſſions the Grace of God makes upon us.

Thus with reſpect to Gifts, in oppoſition to this dangerous Sin of quenching 'em, we are commanded to *ſtir 'em up* thus, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. The Word in the Original is ἀναζωπυρεῖν, which is plainly a Metaphor borrowed from Fire, which muſt be ſtirred or blown up to make it burn clear. So muſt we excite 'em by holy vivacity and diligence in the exerciſe of 'em.

Secondly, *We may be ſaid to Quench the Spirit by reſiſting and counter-acting its holy influences.*

Even as Water when thrown on the Fire, either wholly extinguiſhes, or greatly abates the heat and force of it. And this is a more dangerous degree of the Sin we are caution'd againſt in the Text. All ſin does in ſome degree tend to quench the Spirit, as it does in ſome degree oppoſe the tendency

dency of its gracious operations. But yet its not meer ſins of Ignorance, or meer inadvertency and infirmity, that are in any eminent or ſtrict Senſe, ſaid to quench the Spirit. But thoſe ſins plainly do ſo which are in their own nature hainous and deliberate, committed againſt the clear Light and powerful checks of the Holy Spirit. Sins that are acted in the face of our ſtrong Convictions of the Evil of 'em, and our former reſolutions againſt 'em, which the Holy Spirit had excited; theſe dangerouſly tend to quench the Holy Spirit. Theſe give a deep Wound to our graces, and dreadfully weaken the ſtrength of our Holy Habits. Theſe highly provoke that Holy Spirit to depart from us, and give us up for the preſent to the power of Temptations, when we chuſe rather to follow the Conduct of our brutiſh Luſts than his Holy Dictates. By theſe we are ſaid *to grieve the Holy Spirit*, *Eph.* 1. 30. becauſe we do what he highly diſlikes, and will evidence his diſlike of by the Suſpenſion of his influences of Grace and Comfort: Nay, by theſe we are ſaid to *reſiſt the Holy Spirit*, Acts 7. 15. Not that we can hinder any effects, that his infinite power reſolved to produce: But we, Alaſs too often! not only turn a deaf Ear to his Dictates and Motions, but act in oppoſition to 'em, and purſue the contrary Dictates and Motions of ſin. And no wonder that ſuch perverſe reſiſtance ſhould provoke the Holy Spirit to retire from us, and ceaſe thoſe gracious Sollicitations which we reject, to gratifie ſome Brutiſh Luſt, ſome baſe and hateful Paſſion; ſuch preſumptuous ſins highly tend to extinguiſh the Light that ſhines in our Minds; to lay waſte our Conſciences, to weaken and ſuppreſs thoſe ſparks of divine Life that are kindled in our Hearts. They are as ſo much water thrown on the flames, that extreamly endanger the quenching of them.

The reaſons that might be urged to enforce the caution, will as properly ſerve as Motives in the Application.

And, *Firſt*, I *would addreſs my ſelf to thoſe hardened ſinners that have ſo far quencht the Holy Spirit, as now to go on in an open courſe of ſin, with little or no remorſe of Conſcience.*

The caſe of ſuch is dreadful, and they have great reaſon (how little diſpoſition ſoever they have) to conſider it before it become remedileſs. There

There is too juſt ground from the Scriptures, to believe that ſome may by a long continued reſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, ſin themſelves even in this Life into a ſtate of incurable impenitency. We read of ſuch as were *once enlightened, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come, that if they fall away, 'tis impoſſible to renew 'em to repentance*, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

And tho' the words following, *viz. their crucifying to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and putting him to open ſhame*, juſtifies the late expoſition of our Divines, who underſtand them chiefly of ſuch as openly renounce the belief of Chriſtianity; yet there ſeems to be no clear reaſon aſſignable why they may not extend to thoſe that openly renounce the practice of it by a notoriouſly wicked Life, after a plauſible profeſſion of it under the higheſt advantages and helps. And the *7th.* & *8th. v.* give too juſt ground to extend 'em ſo far, for they Illuſtrate the *Apoſtles* Senſe, by an excellent Compariſon, *for the Earth that drinks in the Rain that often comes upon it, and brings forth herbs meet for them by whom it's dreſſed, receives bleſſing from God.*

But that which bears Thorns and Bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto Curſing, whoſe end is to be burnt. For theſe Words as related to the former, do at the leaſt imply, That ſuch as under the higheſt means and advantages, for the producing the genuine Fruits of Practical Chriſtianity, and ſome ſucceſs of 'em, do afterwards entirely relapſe into an open Courſe of irreligion and wickedneſs, are in a Caſe next to hopeleſs and deſperate. They ſeem not recoverable according to the ordinary methods of the Grace of God. It muſt be a prerogative and a Miracle of mercy that muſt prevent their ruin. And, O what Reaſon have thoſe to fear leſt they ſhould ſin themſelves into this diſmal caſe, who have ſo frequently overcome, and baffled ſtrong Convictions; ſo long reſiſted the motions of the Spirit of God, and as it were affronted 'em by gratifying their Luſts in diſpite of 'em; that now they can ſin with ſome degree of a wretched peace and ſecurity; their Conſcience, being almoſt

ſeared

ſeared, ſcarce feel the deepeſt Wounds they give 'em by hainous tranſgreſſions: They that could not before ſin without great clamour, and noiſe, can do it now witohut any conſiderable reſtraint or checks of their reluctant Judgments. The dictates and reproofs which they heard before, are now ſilenc'd. And what they would (like *Hazael* 2 Kings 8. 13.) have abhorred and trembled at before, they can now act without any inward ſhame or fear; ſure if you have any ſenſe left at all, you cannot but obſerve, you have in a great meaſure quencht all the motions of the Spirit of God, and baniſhed him from your hearts. Did he continue to ſtrive with you, could your Conſciences be ſo ſtupified, while you are daily contracting the moſt aggravated Guilt by renewed acts of Intemperance, uncleannels, injuſtice, lying, groſs miſpence of time, prophanation of the Sabbath, ſwearing, *&c.* Could you daily ruſh into ſo palpable ſins, and your hearts never once ſmite you, never offer one ſerious conſideration or Argument, as a rub in your way, never make the leaſt remonſtrance of the danger you are running into? No ſure, it is impoſſible that Conſcience ſhould be ſo entirely benummed and ſtupified, were it not for the preſent entirely forſaken by the Holy Spirit.

And O how dangerous is the ſtate of a Soul when that Bleſſed Spirit has abandoned it after long ſtruggles and conflicts. No wonder that ſuch are given up to a reprobate mind, and an incorrigible impenitent heart, to *treaſure up wrath againſt the day of Wrath, &c.* And no wonder that Satan regains the entire poſſeſſion of thoſe Souls whom that bleſſed Spirit has deſerted, and fixed his full uncontroulable Dominion there; and alaſs how little is this conſidered by thoſe deſperate wretches that are arrived to ſuch a degree of prophaneneſs as to ridicule and mock at the Operations of the Holy Spirit, which they ſhould earneſtly beg, and diligently improve: How little do they ponder thoſe moſt terrible of all threatnings, *my People would not hearken to my Voice, and Iſrael would none of me, So I gave them up to their own Hearts Luſts, and they walked in their own Councils*, Pſal. 81. 11, 12. Revel. 22. 12. *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that is filthy, let him be*

filthy

filthy ſtill, Gen. 6. 3. *My Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive*, &c. When it once comes to this that ſo awful a doom is paſt, it may well be ſaid of ſuch, *there remains no more a Sacrifice for ſin: But a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation, which ſhall conſume the Adverſaries*, Heb. 10. 26.

2. *I would addreſs this diſcourſe to ſuch as are under theſe common operations of the Holy Spirit, that tend to their ſincere Converſion and Repentance. And ſuch do highly need this caution, that they quench not the Spirit.*

Now perhaps that Holy Spirit is ſtriving with you; he ſhines into your Minds with thoſe Rays of Light that diſcover to you the unconceivable Evil and demerit of ſin, and the dreadful conſequences of your perſiſting impenitently in it: The excellency of holineſs, and the bleſſed Iſſue of it in the heavenly Glory. The ſuitableneſs, and ſufficiency of a Saviour, and the neceſſity of accepting the offers, and complying with the deſigns of his Grace for your Salvation. He is now ſolliciting you to renounce your Tranſgreſſions with abhorrence; to return through a Mediator to God, as your reconciled Father, and to embrace theſe Paths of holineſs, that lead to eternal Life.

O let not theſe Convictions die, but cheriſh 'em by frequent and ſerious Meditations till they have deeply poſſeſt and changed your practical Judgments. Suffer not thoſe Rays of Light to be extinguiſh'd by the fumes of ſenſual Luſts. *Detain not the Truth of God in unrighteouſneſs.* Let not the noiſe and hurry of Worldly buſineſs or Pleaſures, ſilence the Dictates of an awaken'd Conſcience. Follow 'em on by deep and intenſe Thoughts, and urge 'em by the moſt cogent Arguments till you feel their perſuaſive force and power.

Have theſe lively motions excited any ſerious purpoſes to yield and comply with what the Holy Spirit ſollicites you to? O let not theſe good Reſolutions prove abortive, and become only *as the morning Cloud and early Dew that ſoon goes away*, Hoſ. 6. 4. Bring 'em by ſerious deliberation to a fixed determination and choice that may change your Hearts, and turn the very bent of 'em towards God, and Holineſs, and Heaven. Let 'em not expire in empty barren Wiſhes, or ſlight or ſuperficial

ficial Endeavours. Suffer 'em not to be over-born by the reluctancy of the Fleſh, but contend againſt all the oppoſition of a liſtleſs and diſinclined Heart: Eſpecially, extinguiſh not the Sentiments of Conſcience, by running into new preſumptuous Tranſgreſſions, and cruſh not theſe early Purpoſes, by ruſhing immediately into Sins that directly violate 'em.

To urge you hereto, conſider,

1. *Your Converſion is now highly probable, if you quench not, but cheriſh the preſent motions of the Holy Spirit.*

This is the tendency, and will be the happy iſſue of his gracious Operations, if your wilful reſiſtance prevent not. For the bleſſed God doth not vouchſafe theſe ſupernatural Aids in vain. They will either prevail to renew our Natures, or leave us inexcuſable. Nor will he forſake our Souls, till they forſake him; nor will his holy Spirit abandon us, till our perverſe Oppoſition quench his Motions, and provoke him to retire from us. And, Oh! what hopes were there of our ſincere return to God, if our Souls were but by deep conſideration fitted to receive the Impreſſions of the Holy Spirit. The Arguments that ſhould perſuade us thereto, are ſtrong and powerful, and there is nothing reaſonable can be objected againſt it. And would but we ſet our ſelves to ponder 'em, and fix our thoughts upon 'em, how quickly would the Holy Spirit, aſſiſt our minds, and repreſent the great things that concern our Duty and our Happineſs, in a clear, convincing Light! How eaſily can he conquer the averſion of a backward heart, and render it pliable to the will of God! How ſoon can he knock off the Fetters of ſin, and reſcue our captivated Souls from that wretched Bondage, and reſtore them to the liberty of the Children of God! What a fair proſpect is there of our ſincere Repentance, if we do not now harden our hearts, and deafen our ears, but open both to his Inſtructions and Counſels! And how juſt is it, that we ſhould contribute our utmoſt in the uſe of our reaſonable Powers towards our own recovery, and not expect to be treated as Stocks and Stones, as lifeleſs and inſenſible Creatures, in the great work of our Converſion! To what end does God command us to

make to our ſelves a new heart, and a new ſpirit, and caſt away our tranſgreſſions, Ezek. 18. 31. if there be nothing to be done on our part towards it in the uſe of ſuitable means.

2. *The longer you continue to quench the holy Spirit by neglect or reſiſtance of his holy motions, your Converſion becomes the more difficult, and you endanger more being forſaken by him.*

Your Converſion becomes the more difficult: Corrupt Inclinations gain more irreſiſtible power, by trampling on the Convictions of Conſcience, and bearing down ſlight and unſtable Reſolutions. Continuance in ſin encreaſes the Enmity of our Natures againſt the bleſſed God, and his holy Laws and Government; and aggravated Guilt, diſpoſes the more to flee from God in a ſecret deſpair of Mercy and Pardon from him; and we provoke the holy Spirit the more to depart from us.

Res delicata Spiritus Sanctus. Every time we ſtifle thoſe holy Truths that ſhould reclaim us from a life of ſin, and excite us to our Duty; every time we reject his inward perſuaſions thereto, we grieve him. He reſents our perverſe Carriage; and we have great reaſon to fear, if we perſiſt to do ſo, he will ſhew his Reſentments of it, by abandoning our Souls to the rage and violence of thoſe corrupt Inclinations, which we cheriſh in a wretched oppoſition to his heavenly ſuggeſtions and dictates. And, O how dark and deſolate an habitation, nay, what a ſink of unclean Thoughts and Affections wou'd theſe hearts be, if once the *Holy Spirit* ſhould entirely deſert 'em!

But this leads me to add,

3. *The Caſe of ſuch as after good impreſſions made on 'em, tending to Converſion, revolt to an open courſe of ſin by quenching the Holy Spirit, is moſt deplorable.*

And yet ſuch a dreadful Apoſtacy is like to be the conſequence, if by our extinguiſhing thoſe Impreſſions, we baniſh the *Holy Spirit* from us.

Theſe words ſhould be read by ſuch of us with holy fear and trembling. *If after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the World, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Chriſt, they*

they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning; for it had been better for 'em not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known it to turn from the Holy Commandment delivered to 'em. But 'tis happened to 'em according to the true Proverb; the Dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow that is waſht to her wallowing in the mire, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. See alſo to the ſame purpoſe, the Parable of the Man out of whom *one unclean Spirit went forth, but returned with ſeven more wicked than himſelf,* Mat. 12. 43, 44, 45. Of whom it's obſerved, *His laſt State was worſe than his firſt.* — Review what was ſaid to hardned Sinners.

O cheriſh then the Holy Spirit! bring your Souls as tender Wax, ready to receive his ſtamp and impreſſion; bring a teachable mind to his Inſtructions, and a tractable heart to his Counſels. Implore and improve thoſe divine Influences, which ſhould renew and transform your Nature, entertain thoſe heavenly Rays and Sparks that ſhould enflame your hearts with love to God and Holineſs, conſume your Droſs, and refine your Souls to an amiable conformity to the Divine Nature and Will.

3. *I ſhould addreſs my ſelf to the truly Regenerate.*

And it's far from being a needleſs Caution, even to ſuch that they Quench not the Spirit; or rather 'tis to ſuch principally that the Apoſtle here directs it.

And as the caution may be juſtly extended both to the Gifts and the Graces of the Holy Spirit, ſo what I ſhould ſay to ſuch will fall under theſe two Heads.

Firſt, *How far may the truly Regenerate quench the Holy Spirit?*

Secondly, *What ſhould we do or avoid, that we may not quench it?*

Firſt, *How far may the truly Regenerate quench the Holy Spirit.*

I the rather propoſe this Queſtion, becauſe it may ſeem ſtrange that they ſhould be cautioned againſt it; and the due reſolution of the Queſtion, will furniſh us with proper

Motives to enforce this neceſſary caution.

But the time will only allow me briefly to ſuggeſt thoſe Heads which ſhould be enlarged on.

Even the Regenerate may quench the Spirit.

Firſt, *As to their Graces.* For,

1. *Holy Habits and Diſpoſitions may be dreadfully weakened, and contrary Habits gain conſiderable ſtrength.*

By neglecting to beg and improve the illuminations of the Holy Spirit, their degrees of Knowledge may be extreamly low, and their Faith it ſelf may be exceedingly clouded, ſo that it cannot reallize the great Truths of Religion; and give 'em thoſe lively heart-affecting apprehenſions of 'em, which they had before. It may be ſadly enfeebled by troubleſome Doubts, that will render our conceptions of divine and ſpiritual Objects in a great meaſure dark, conjectural and lifeleſs; the too great prevalency of the inordinate love of this World, may occaſion ſo wretched a remiſsneſs of our love to God, that our affections will not aſcend to him, with that frequency and that vigour as ſometimes they have done: And alaſs! how often does the love of ſenſual Delights ſo damp our Affections towards Heaven, that our Deſires and Hopes of it become comparatively faint and languid, cold and indifferent! The ſame might be added as to other Graces.

And, alaſs! how dreadfully is the Spirit of God quencht, when theſe holy Fruits of it are in ſo declining and wither'd a ſtate, when it's divine Impreſſions are almoſt razed out; when holy Principles are but as a Spark covered with aſhes, ſcarce able to overcome what tends to ſuppreſs it, and ready to expire and die.

2. *Nay, the H. Spirit may be ſo far quencht in the regenerate, as that there may be for the preſent a dreadful intermiſſion of Holy Actions.*

How awful an inſtance is *David* hereof? 2 *Sam.* 11, 12, *chap.* How did all the ſentiments of his Conſcience ſeem ſuppreſt, and all holy diſpoſitions dormant, when he could proceed from the ſin of Adultery, to that of premeditated Murder: And continue ſo long under the Guilt of both before his Conſci-

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ence seem'd thoroughly awakened, and oppressed Grace did any thing considerable towards his recovery from so dismall a fall. There are also more secret and less observable intermissions of the exercise of our graces: I wish it may not be too justly said of too many of us, that we often spend days together with very few lively admiring thoughts of God, or ardent breathings of holy affections towards him. There are many sad interruptions and chasms in our holy Obedience. Our divine Principles seem often asleep, dull, and unactive, and the Law in our Members seems to captivate the Law of our minds. Our Spirits are quite fettered and bound up, instead of being enlarged in our Duty.

And how does this argue our having in a great Degree quencht the H. Spirit, when his vital influences seem for the present, interrupted or suspended, and it can scarce be discerned by any vital Actions of holiness in our own Souls, whether there be a principle of Divine Life there.

3. *And no doubt all the consolations of the Holy Spirit may be intercepted.*

It cannot be well otherwise, when our Graces so dreadfully decline, and there is so woful an intermission of the exercise of 'em. 'Tis no wonder that in that case there is almost a total extinction of all holy joy, and our Comforts are eclips't, as our Graces are darkened. How should the holy Spirit *witness our Adoption*, when the Characters of the *Children of God*, are so little discernible in us, and we act so unsutably to our relation to him? How should he ravish us with the prospect of our heavenly Inheritance, when we have contracted so wretched an unsutableness and indisposition in our temper to it; and have done so much to blot all our Evidences for it? Nay, Alas! we may sin our selves into so disconsolate darkness, as to have all Rays of Divine favour intercepted. We may be reduc't to fearful perplexities about our own state, such as will cost us deep Agonies and Conflicts, the torments of broken or disjointed Bones, the restless pain and smart of a wounded Spirit. See this in *David, Psal.* 51. 8, *v.* 11, 12. and alas it's too common with us to sin our selves into

into very uncomfortable doubts, so that as the Evidences of our sincerity are but weak and dubious, so our Joys are but at a very low Ebb.

And how must the holy Spirit be quencht by us, when there is such a suspension of those Comforts, which 'tis one part of his Office to Communicate, and diffuse into the Hearts of all the Children of God.

2. *As to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.*

These also may be by our negligence abated in a considerable Degree, and the abatement of 'em may consequently render us less useful in our station to the Glory of God, and the service of his Church, and deprive us of the comfort that should arise thence. Proceed we to the

2. Question. *What should we do or avoid that we may not quench the holy Spirit.*

Answer. According to what was suggested in the explication of the Caution.—1. *In respect of our Graces.*

1. *We must beware of quenching the Spirit, by neglecting to receive and improve his gracious influences.* To that purpose,

1. *Let us keep up a constant course of those Holy Duties, wherein we may especially expect the influences of the holy Spirit, to excite and improve all holy dispositions in us.*

And here I would particularly recommend these two.

1. *Secret Meditation.*

'Tis in this Duty that the holy Spirit does most intimately converse with, and has the freest access to our Spirits.

Our own serious and retired thoughts, are the great means he makes use of, to cast our Souls into a holy heavenly Mold; and herein, he acts most agreeably to our reasonable nature, and the excellent powers of it.

While we are calling up our own Minds to the Contemplation of Divine and Spiritual Objects, while we are pondering what the Gospel reveals to us concerning the excellent nature of the Blessed God, and the glorious Designs of his Wisdom and Grace, concerning our Incarnate Redeemer, and the admirable Constitution and Administration of his Kingdom of Grace, and the blessed Issues of it in the heavenly state, while we are considering

considering our Duty in compliance with the offers of Divine Grace, and our high expectations and hopes from it, *&c.* The holy Spirit shines in with clearer Light, and elevates our minds to more lively and affecting thoughts of the great things we do believe. We see a greater Excellency and Lustre in divine Truths, and we feel more warm and vigorous impressions of 'em upon our hearts.

We are more taken up in the admiration of divine Perfections, especially of the infinite Wisdom and Love, holiness and justice of God, as they shine out in the methods of his Government over fallen Mankind, thro' a Mediator.

While we are reflecting on the infinite Love of God, in sending his own Son on so merciful an Errand, and his inestimable condescension and Love in all he has done and suffered for our Salvation, our hearts are inflam'd with the highest fervours of Love to our God and Saviour, and holy praises become even the Pulse and Breath of our Souls.

While we are contemplating the evil of sin, our hearts are more confirmed in their abhorrence of it, and contract more of a holy antipathy against it. While we are beholding the glory of Holiness, our Souls are ravisht with the Beauty of it, and feel its attractive Power, so as the practice of it becomes the most delightful study and imployment of our Lives.

While we are looking into the Heavenly *Canaan* with the help of that divine Prospective Glass, the promises of the Gospel, we still discover more of the Glories of the World above, to enkindle in us more ardent desires and more vigorous pursuits after that heavenly state. In a word, while we muse, the holy Fire is enkindled, and our Souls feel a divine warmth as it were, diffusing it self through all their Powers, *Psal.* 39. 3. While the holy Spirit is as it were communing with us in the secret Language of our own Minds, as enlighten'd by the Word of God. How often have we occasion to reflect, as the two Disciples *Luke* 24, 32. *Did not our Hearts burn within us?* We are then fittest to receive and cherish all Rays of divine Light, and attend to all the Arguments and Motives by which

he

he urges our duty on us, and to perceive the perſuaſive force and weight of 'em.

And its owing to the ſad neglect of this Duty, or our being leſs frequent and diligent in it, that we are advanced to no higher degrees of holineſs by the Spirit our ſanctifier, and receive no larger communications of divine Light and Life, Love and Joy from him.

And no wonder that thoſe divine Objects ſhould ſo little affect us, which we ſo little converſe with, or, that we feel ſo little the power of the great things we believe, when we ſo rarely impreſs 'em on our own hearts, by deep and attentive conſideration.

And no wonder the holy Spirit ſhould ſuſpend thoſe divine Influences which we ſo little value, that we will not find time and leiſure for 'em, and put our own Spirits in the moſt ſutable poſture and frame to receive and entertain them.

2. *Secret Prayer* is another Duty requiſit to our receiving and improving the Influences of the holy Spirit.

'Tis in that Duty eſpecially, that the holy Spirit acts in us, as the Spirit of Adoption, and excites in us all thoſe affections which ſhould breathe in the hearts of the Children of God, towards their heavenly Father; ſee *Rom.* 8. 15. compared with the 26 *v.* And thoſe Graces which Meditation does excite, do moſt properly vent themſelves in our fervent Addreſſes unto God. 'Tis in ſuch ſecret Addreſſes that our particular Repentance and ſorrow for our particular Offences, that our gratitude and Love for the peculiar Mercies of God, that our ſubmiſſion and reſignation to his diſpoſal, that our truſt and confidence in his Conduct, that our ſteddy belief of his promiſes, and vigorous hope of their accompliſhment, and that our entire devotedneſs to his Intereſt, and zeal for his Glory, are the moſt ſenſibly exerciſed and heightened.

And in that Duty we uſually find the moſt warm and powerful impreſſions, and aids of the divine Spirit to enlarge our Hearts, and raiſe theſe Graces to higher vigour and ſtrength.

And

And as in Prayer we breathe out our earneſt Deſires after the higher Communications of Divine Grace; ſo that Duty puts us in the moſt ſuitable temper to receive 'em, when they are vouchſaf't as the return of Prayer. We do as it were, receive 'em as Supplicants on our knees, and conſequently moſt ſenſibly feel and own our Obligations to the Holy Spirit for all the progreſs and advances we make in our holy, heavenly Life towards Life Eternal.

How careful ſhould we then be, that we quench not the Holy Spirit by reſtraining Prayer! And the context do's fully juſtify this particular Caution againſt the neglect of this particular Duty; for the Apoſtle having enjoined our *praying without ceaſing, and our giving thanks in all things*; (and the latter Duty I wou'd here include in the former,) he immediately adds, *Quench not the Spirit*, q. d. Do not by the rare or cold performance of theſe Duties, extinguiſh the Divine Fire which Prayer does ſupply the Fuel of, and gives the higheſt advantage to enkindle Flames of Divine Love and Gratitude in our Hearts. And how can we expect the Holy Spirit ſhou'd convey higher Degrees of Light and Holineſs, when we ſcarce think 'em worth our importunate Deſires? Or that he ſhould enliven thoſe holy Affections which we ſtifle and ſuppreſs, by ſo frequent ſuppreſſion of this Duty, which is ſo deſervedly called the *Breath of Regenerate Souls*.

O let us not then be ſo great ſtrangers to the daily and frequent diſcharge of theſe two Duties, as we would not be ſtrangers to thoſe larger effuſions of the Spirit of God, which ſo many pious Souls have happily experienc'd, and expreſs'd, in an eminently lively and uſeful Life! Let not our wretched ſloath and lazineſs forfeit thoſe Divine Influences, which we will not diligently ſeek, in the uſe of theſe preſcribed, (and moſt ſuitable) means. And methinks, we that have ſometimes felt the Efficacy of theſe Duties, when the Holy Spirit has enlarged our Hearts in 'em, and their happy effects on our Temper and Life, ſhou'd be more conſtant in 'em, that thereby we may be as it were found in the Road of Divine Grace.

But,

2. *Let us diligently observe and live up to the present Dictates and Motions of the Holy Spirit.*

If it be enquired, how we shall know and distinguish the Dictates and Motions of the Spirit of God from the suggestions of the Tempter? I Answer:

All the internal Dictates and Motions of the Spirit of God must be measured by his external Doctrines and Precepts already revealed in the Holy Scriptures. We have, and we need no other Rule to judge of 'em by. Whatever thy own Conscience, when thou art in the most serious temper, does urge thee to, and that agreeably to the revealed Will of God, That and that alone may'st thou regard, as a Dictate and Motion of his Holy Spirit: For it's the great design of the holy Spirit in his internal operations on our Souls, to guide our Minds to clearer Apprehensions of what he has already made known by his inspired Pen-men, the Prophets and Apostles, to engrave these Laws on our Hearts, which are recorded in these excellent Writings.

And to pretend to any Dictates of the Holy Spirit, which are not agreeable to those Divine Oracles, is to expose our selves to the Delusions of Satan, or our own heated and abused Fancies. In all these Enquiries, we must have recourse to *the Law and to the Testimonies of God; for if they speak not according to these, 'tis because there is no Light in 'em,* Isa. 8. 20.

Now let us carefully observe and faithfully comply with the present Dictates and Motions of the Holy Spirit.

Let us readily entertain divine Truths, how cross soever to our sensual Inclinations or worldly Interest; Let us *come to the Light*, and not suffer any corrupt Affections to prepossess our Minds with sinful Prejudices against it, *John* 3. 21. Let us give up our Understandings to the Conduct of the Holy Spirit, who has promised *to lead us into all* (necessary) *Truth*, and *receive the Truth in the love of it.* Let's not content our selves with the bare empty speculation of the great Doctrines of the Gospel, but turn 'em into practical Principles; and endeavour to act up to the light of a well instructed Conscience. Let's

give

give Divine Revelation a transforming Power and Vertue, by our serious belief of it. Let's impartially endeavour to understand the Will of God, that we may obey it.

Do's the Holy Spirit follicite and move us to our Duty? Let's readily obey the motion: Let's not dispute his Counsels, or consult with Flesh and Blood, whether we shou'd follow 'em or no, *Gal.* 1. 16. Let's not put off the execution of what he dictates with frivolous excuses or tedious delays; Let's up with our sails, while we have now a favourable Gale, and blow up the holy Flame, whilst that heavenly Fire supplies us with new heat and warmth. Let's attend to the voice behind us, when it directs our way, and diligently set about whatever that blessed Monitor within prompts us to.

'Tis the very Character of the Children of God, that they are led by the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit, see *Rom.* 8. 1. and 14. Let's not indulge, but contend against all the unreasonable reluctancy of a backward disinclined heart. Let's not put off his Exhortations with slight Resolves and ineffectual Purposes, but engage in our present Duty (to which he is now persuading us,) with holy vigour and fervency. For alas! how often do we quench the Holy Spirit, and render his motions ineffectual by indulging the wretched sluggishness of a listless and indisposed mind, and differring our Duty to a pretendedly fitter season (like *Felix* when *Paul* had awakened his Conscience, *Acts* 24 25.)

But,

2 *We must especially beware of quenching the Spirit by resisting or counteracting his gracious influences.*

To that end we must chiefly beware of all deliberate and presumptuous transgressions, *Psal.* 19. 30. All willful *Omissions of known Duty*, or *Commission of known sins* against the light of Conscience, and the checks of the holy Spirit. Such sins give a deep wound to our Spiritual Life: They cast the very principles of it (I mean the graces of the holy Spirit) into a languishing swoon; they sadly weaken our holy Resolutions, and almost revive the strength, and recover the force of our mortified corruptions. Grace looks as if it were dormant and

captivated, and ſin ſeems to have reaſcended the throne; ſuch ſins alſo make a ſad breach and interruption in our Obedience, and for the preſent quite damm up the ſtream of it: And no wonder that they eclipſe the Light of divine Favour, and baniſh all divine Joys and hopes. And well may they produce theſe diſmal effects, when they provoke the holy Spirit to ſuſpend his influences of grace and comfort.

For how can it be expected that the holy Spirit ſhould ſtill ſtrive while we ſo obſtinately oppoſe? That he ſhould blow up theſe Flames which we are throwing water upon? When 'tis the Language of the holy Spirit, do not this abominable thing which I hate, and yet at the beck of ſome wretched Paſſion or Luſt we will do it?

No wonder that he reſents the affront, and leaves thoſe at preſent to themſelves, who thus wilfully open their Ears to the ſuggeſtions of the Tempter, and deafen 'em againſt his Counſels. O let us then reverence the Dictates of the Holy Spirit, and not dare to offer any ſuch curſed violence to 'em. Let's not by wilful inconſideration reject thoſe Arguments which the holy Spirit ſuggeſts to reſtrain us from ſinning. Nay let's be more fearful of going againſt the ſuſpicions and jealouſies of an awakened Conſcience.

Let's not dare to act againſt the doubts and Fears of a miſgiving mind, that what we are about to do is diſpleaſing to God, leſt we thereby weaken his Authority in our own Conſciences, *Rom.* 14. and laſt *v. Whatſoever is not Faith, is ſin*, i. e. Whatever we do while we are not perſwaded of, but rather ſuſpect and queſtion the lawfulneſs of it.

But eſpecially, *Let's beware of ſuch ſins as more directly oppoſe and counter-act the influences of the Holy Spirit, ſuch as croſs the chief deſign and tendency of his gracious operations.*

For inſtance,

1. He is a *Spirit of Light*, whoſe great Office it is to diffuſe the Light of divine knowledge into our Minds, which ſhall gradually ſpring up to perfect eternal day.

Let's beware of quenching him by a proud underſtanding, that will not ſubmit to what he has plainly revealed, and

not

not content to be a diſcerner, would become a *Peremptory Judge* of his Revelations. Juſtly may the holy Spirit leave thoſe to dangerous Errors, who will not follow his guidance, and rely on the Teſtimony of infinite Truth, but are ready to reject any doctrine how clearly ſoever it be aſſerted in the Holy Scriptures, if their ſhallow reaſon cannot fully comprehend it, or reſolve all the difficulties that relate to it. Not that any part of the divine Revelation is contrary to any true Principles of reaſon: Tho' ſeveral Myſteries are ſo ſublime, that as our reaſon could never have found 'em out, ſo when diſcovered it cannot fully peirce into the depth of 'em.

And no wonder that we who can ſo little comprehend how our own Souls are united to theſe Bodies, or how they make uſe of bodily Organs in their various operations (tho' we cannot doubt of their doing ſo) ſhould be as little able to diſcern into the manner how the divine Nature ſhould have ſuch a threefold diſtinct mode of ſubſiſtence, or be by an admirable fœcundity three in one. Or how the eternal Word ſhould aſſume our nature into ſo near and inſeparable Union with his own. And from this arrogance of an unhumbled mind, all the Socinian Errors (the contagion whereof ſeems to ſpread it ſelf to a ſtrange degree in this age) too evidently ſpring.

Let's beware alſo of *Quenching the Holy Spirit*, by ſecret unbelief of the great and fundamental Principles of Chriſtianity. Infidelity has dangerouſly diffuſed it ſelf even in this Kingdom, notwithſtanding all the excellent Writings that have oppoſed it, and the beſt of us have need to be armed againſt the poiſonous influence of it: Then only may we expect higher degrees of divine knowledge, when we both bring a teachable Mind to the Oracles of God, enquiring into 'em in a humble dependence on the illumination of the holy Spirit, and when we come with a due reverence of the Authority and Truth of God, ready to yield a full aſſent to whatever we are convinc'd he has revealed.

And

And when our Judgments are ſetled in the belief of the holy Scripture upon clear and impartial ſearch, let's not give way to every doubt, that Satan may ſuggeſt, or every objection that a vain Caviller may caſt in our way.

2. The Holy Spirit is alſo a *Spirit of Love*, and that divine Nature which he Communicates to the Children of God, is chiefly made up of *Love to God*, and *Love to one another*. 'Tis theſe holy Flames which that ſacred refining fire does eſpecially kindle in our hearts.

Let's beware of quenching the Spirit by extinguiſhing theſe holy Flames of Love to God, and to that end let's chiefly beware of the *inordinate Love of this World*. So far as that recovers any thing of its former ſtrength, it does proportionably abate the Degrees of our Love to God, and is like ſo much water caſt on that holy Fire, ſee 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. *ver. James* 4. 4. *v.* When this World doth in too great a Meaſure, engroſs our thoughts and time; when our cares about it are too intenſe and vehement.

When we begin to place too much of our contentment and happineſs in theſe ſenſible enjoyments, and have too ſtrong a reliſh of 'em; How do we quench the lively Spirit, whoſe great deſign is to crucifie us to this World, that our inordinate Affections to it being dead, they may aſcend with frequency and fervour unto God, as the fountain of our happineſs, and fix in him as the Center of our Everlaſting Reſt? How cautious then ſhould we be againſt any dangerous competition of this World with God, for the ſoveraignty of our eſteem and choice, our deſire and delight? Let's beware of ſo debaſing our affections by ſuffering 'em to ſink into this Earth as will clog 'em when ever they ſhould freely mount up on the Wings of ardent deſire towards God and Heaven.

Let's beware of Quenching the Holy Spirit, by quenching thoſe Flames of holy Love to all, ſo far as they bear any thing of the Image of our heavenly Father. To that end let's beware of all thoſe irregular Paſſions and bitter animoſities that have a pernicious tendency to weaken or extinguiſh Divine Love.

And

And alaſs! how little do the moſt of Chriſtians conſider, how much they do to quench the holy Spirit, (who is a Spirit of Unity and Love,) by the unchriſtian Violence and Diſcord wherewith they manage their otherwiſe very inconſiderable Differences; it was never the deſign of the Spirit of God to bring all the Members of Chriſts myſtical Body to an exact Uniformity in unneceſſary Opinions and Practices; But to bring 'em to an *Unity* in the great *Eſſentials* of *Faith* and *Holineſs*, and thereby to cement 'em in the *Bonds* of mutual *Love*. And to this deſign, all the numerous Precepts that relate to Unity, Peace and Love, are plainly calculated and ſuited. How do we then counteract it, when all the little Differences of Judgment or Practice (wherein the intereſt of Faith and Holineſs have little or no concern,) become the Engines of Satan to divide our Affections, and ſet us at an unreaſonable diſtance from one another: When accordingly thoſe Differences are purſued with uncharitable Judgment, unreaſonable Suſpitions, unjuſt Cenſures, or reviling Language, concerning one another? How grievous muſt that be to the Holy Spirit, that dwells in all the Children of God, to inſpire 'em with the Charity, that ſhould rather expreſs it ſelf by pitying the Ignorance, condeſcending to the weakneſs, and bearing the infirmities of our Brethren, by putting the moſt favourable conſtruction on their Words and Actions, by eſteeming whatever we diſcern of the Image of our Lord in 'em, and emproving the far greater things wherein we agree, as a ſufficient Foundation, for mutual Love and Communion.

3. He is alſo a Spirit of *Holineſs* and *Purity*: Let's then beware of quenching the Holy Spirit, by giving the leaſt indulgence to ſenſual Luſts.

'Tis the great Deſign and Office of the Holy Spirit, to mortifie in us the Deeds of the Fleſh. And therefore the Fleſh and the Spirit are oppoſed as contrary Principles by which we are acted, or contrary Maſters, the *one of whom we ſerve and obey*. See *Rom.* 8. 1. 13, *&c.* 'Tis his great work to ſpiritualize our Natures, & thereby

thereby to ſuit us to thoſe Exerciſes and Duties of Religion which are ſpiritual and heavenly, and enable us to reliſh the ſpiritual and ſolid Pleaſure of 'em.

What then can we do, that will more dangerouſly tend to quench the holy Spirit than to pamper this Fleſh, and gratify it's inordinate Affections and Deſires, which by the aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit, we ſhould daily crucify? And how do all degrees of Intemperance, Laſciviouſneſs, Pride, Luxury and Senſuality, tend to cloud our Reaſon, corrupt our Imagination, degrade our Affections, and ſo brutify our Souls, as to indiſpoſe 'em for whatever is holy or heavenly?

The Fleſh will ſtruggle againſt the Spirit, and the Luſts thereof war againſt our Souls, by oppoſing his motions, *Gal.* 5. 17. 1. *Pet.* 2. 11. And how ſhou'd theſe minds be fit to entertain the Divine Light when darkened with the Fumes of Luſt? Or how ſhou'd they attend to his motions, under the Conduct and hurry of bruti ſh Inclinations? Or how ſhou'd the holy Spirit abide in a Soul polluted with impure Thoughts and vile Deſires? O let's then ſubdue this Rebel Fleſh, bring theſe Bodies into ſubjection, mortify and check every irregular Deſire and Inclination, as ever we wou'd preſerve theſe Souls and Bodies as an acceptable Temple for the holy Spirit to dwell in, who will never make an impure brutifyed nature, his Habitation and Reſidence.

Laſtly, he is a *Spirit of Conſolation and Joy.*

'Tis one great part of his Office to diffuſe Divine Joy into our Hearts, and maintain it as the Seed and the Fore-taſt of eternal Joys.

O Let's beware then of counteracting this great Deſign, either by our ſinful Fears and Deſpondency on the one hand, or by any exceſs of carnal Mirth on the other!

Let's not indulge thoſe unreaſonable and endleſs Fears, which ſpring from the injurious thoughts of God and his Goodneſs, and thereby rob us of thoſe comforts, which it's the great Deſign of the holy Spirit to raiſe us to in a courſe of holy Obedience. And alaſs! how many ſincere Chriſtians have need to be warned of this, whoſe Life is almoſt entirely made up

of

of Complaints and Doubts? As if this were the great design and end of their Christian Profession: Such shou'd consider, that their sorrow for sin it self, is no farther required by God than it tends to divorce their Hearts from it, and prepare 'em for the thankful sense of pardoning Mercy. That 'tis a great dishonour to God, either to question the truth of his Promises made to all returning-sinners, or not to rejoyce in a state of pardon and salvation, when his Grace has given us an Interest in it.

That it's a great wrong to our own Souls, when we have upon impartial Self-tryal found just grounds to conclude the sincerity of our Repentance and Obedience, to call it into doubt upon every unreasonable scruple, where some deliberate sin, or visible declension in Grace, does not give occasion for just Suspition; that it's the great Office of the Holy Spirit, to *witness our Adoption*, and thereby enable us to conclude, that we are *Heirs of God*, and *Coheirs with our Lord Jesus*; that the sense of so glorious Priviledges may shed abroad in us a more fervent Love to God, and enable us to rejoyce more in his infinite and unconceivable Love, *Rom.* 8. 16, 17, *&c.*

Let's also beware of quenching the Spirit by all Excesses of carnal Mirth.

The Joys of the Spirit of God, are the result of our most serious Thoughts (*Res severa verum gaudium,*) and are not to be found in the tumult and noise of sensual jollity.

A mind possest with Froth and Vanity, is uncapable of those divine Consolations, which the lively view of spiritual and heavenly Objects does give.

And I would take this occasion to reflect on the common Custom of this Age, in making all our Converses a meer entertainment of Wit and Fancy. I fear 'tis not sufficiently observed, how pernicious an influence this Custom has had, not only to banish every thing that's serious, out of the Discourses of the prophaner sort of Men, as if it were rude and unfashionable in Conversation: But I wish I might not say to extinguish almost the serious Spirit of practical Religion

amongſt the ſincere profeſſors of it. What need had we to beware, that our cheerfulneſs degenerate not into a ſinful levity, and that the innocent pleaſantneſs of wit (which ſhou'd only ſerve to recommend holy and uſeful Diſcourſe, as Sauce does our Meat,) turns not into what the Apoſtle juſtly warns us of under the Name of *fooliſh talking or jeſting*, Eph. 5. 4. or a ſcurrilous and airy buffoonery.

Nor does exceſs of bodily pleaſures, leſs tend to damp our holy Affections, and indiſpoſe us to reliſh thoſe Joys of the holy Spirit, which are of a purer and more refined nature. There is ſo little ſutableneſs betwixt ſenſitive and ſpiritual Delights, that all immoderacy in the former, ſtrangely allays the ſenſe of the latter. And ſenſitive Delights are then only ſafe, when entirely ſubordinated to ſpiritual ends and purpoſes: As when the ſtreams of divine Love we taſte in temporal Mercies, lead us unto God: Or when bodily Diverſions renew the vigour of our Souls for his Service, in which alone our trueſt and moſt ſolid delight is to be found: And no wonder the holy Spirit ſhou'd not communicate divine Joys to thoſe who wou'd not trample theſe of ſenſe under their Feet, to partake of 'em.

But,

2*dly*, In reſpect of our Gifts, we muſt beware of quenching the holy Spirit: And that either,

1. *By not depending on his aſſiſtance in our indeavours to acquire 'em, and in the continued uſe of 'em.*

There are various Gifts of the holy Spirit beſtowed by his bleſſing on our uſe of the ordinary means for acquiring 'em, as Reading, Meditation, *&c.* Such Gifts as make us capable of being more eminently uſeful, in a more private or publick Station, ſuch as qualify us to inſtruct the ignorant, reclaim the impenitent, comfort the diſtreſſed, reſolve the doubting, *&c.* The Gift of Prayer, which as diſtinguiſh'd from the Grace, is an ability of readily repreſenting our Deſires to God on every emergent occaſion, in ſuitable becoming Expreſſions, *&c.*

Now

Now as every ſuch Gift does capacitate us according to the meaſure of it, for being more ſerviceable to the Body of Chriſt, whereof we are Members; and as we ſhou'd accordingly covet ſuch ſpiritual Gifts, in order to our being ſo uſeful in our Sphere and Place; ſo we muſt beware of all Pride, and Self-confidence, in all our Studies to attain 'em, and in our daily Exerciſe of 'em. This may provoke the holy Spirit to deny his Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing, when we do not humbly implore and rely on it.

Let's beware alſo of quenching the holy Spirit,

2dly. *By our negligence to exerciſe and improve our Gifts.*

Holy Induſtry may encreaſe the number of our Talents, and the holy Spirit will ordinarily impart the richeſt Gifts to thoſe that are moſt diligent in laying 'em out for the Service of their Lord and Maſter: Whereas, ſloathfulneſs may even forfeit the Talents we have, and the holy Spirit may ſuffer theſe Gifts to be abated or loſt, which we employ not to the great Ends for which they were given, the Edification of the Church, *Mat.* 13. 10. *Luke* 19. 26.

And alaſs! how often do the Gifts, both of private Chriſtians and Miniſters, like the Veſſels of the Temple, contract ruſt by lazineſs and diſuſe? Whereas, holy Exerciſe wou'd brighten 'em, and keep 'em in their vigour. How obſervable is this with reference to the gift of Prayer, ſome having ſo long confined themſelves to crutches, (as the Reverend Doctor *Wilkins* called Forms of Prayer,) that they cannot go without 'em.?

Let's beware alſo of quenching the Spirit,

3dly. *By proſtituting thoſe Gifts to the Service of any ſinful paſſion.*

It provokes the holy Spirit to withdraw his Aſſiſtance in the exerciſe of 'em, when they are uſed for Oſtentation, or to gratifie our vain Glory.

When we only hunt after Applauſe by 'em, or when our Parts and Abilities, are only employed to ſupport ſome ſecular Intereſt, and ſerve the ends of our Ambition and Avarice. When thoſe Gifts that ſhou'd render us uſeful Inſtruments, to enlarge the Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus, and propagate the great Intereſt of practical Chriſtianity and Godlineſs, are perverted, to advance the corrupt Deſigns of a degenerate Party, or at leaſt to proſelyte Men to the unneceſſary Opinions and Practices of it. When our Abilities are only uſed to ſerve the Cauſe of Error or ſin, or of Paſſions or Animoſities againſt the Cauſe of Truth and Holineſs, Concord and Love.

This may juſtly provoke the Holy Spirit to bereave us of the Talents we ſo groſly abuſe, or to blaſt thoſe Abilities which we turn as Arms againſt him, to whoſe Service they ſhould be entirely conſecrated.

And thus you have heard what you muſt do or avoid, that you may not quench the holy Spirit.

What has been ſuggeſted before concerning the ſad Effects of our quenching the holy Spirit, may be received to ſupply us with Motives to enforce this ſolemn Caution.

And one wou'd think our own experience of 'em ſhould give 'em the deeper edge.

We that have often had ſo ſad occaſion to reflect on the deſolate ſtate of our Souls, when deſerted for a while by the Spirit of God, ſhou'd beware of quenching his holy Motions. How diſmal has our caſe been, when all our holy Reſolutions have been over-born by the preſent hurry of Temptation, and the violence of corrupt Inclinations? when our Graces have been as it were bound up or caſt into a deep ſleep? When we have found little or no Diſpoſition to any ſpiritual and heaven-

heavenly Duties? and less of any holy warmth, or vigour in the performance of 'em.

When the sense of our Declensions, and perhaps some aggravated guilt has filled us with perplexing Fears, so that we could not draw nigh to God with any ingenuous confidence and hope, but were almost ready in a sinful despondency to flee from his presence, and restrain Prayer before him? When a black Cloud has overshadowed our Minds, so that we could scarce discern any Glympse of Divine Favour? Sure this was a deplorable Condition. And yet alass! how often is all this the sad consequence of our quenching the Holy Spirit?

On the contrary, the blessed Effects which his gracious influences have sometimes produced in our Souls, should excite us to cherish and improve 'em with the greatest diligence.

How lively and affecting apprehensions of the great things of Religion, has he often raised our minds to? What ardours of divine Love has he sometimes shed abroad in our hearts, by impressing them with the sense of his infinite Love? With what strength and vigour have our affections sometimes ascended towards Heaven, when inflamed in the Duties of Religion?

How have we sometimes had our hearts enlarged to run the way of God's commands, and found our Obedience, our pleasure and delight? What ravishing Joys has the lively prospect of the future glory sometimes diffused through our Souls, so that we have been with *Moses* on Mount *Pisgah*, with the heavenly *Canaan* in our view, and thought our selves as it were in the very Suburbs of the new *Jerusalem*? And that we find not these blessed Effects of the Holy Spirit in a more considerable degree, is owing either to our

our perverseness in counteracting, or our sloath in not improving his Motions. For did we instead of quenching 'em continually cherish 'em, and act up to them, how would that Blessed Spirit delight in the Communications of his Grace to us? To what eminent degrees of Divine Light and Life, purity and joy would he raise us here, (of which we want not many excellent instances, even on this Earth) as a Pledge and Seed of the perfection and blessedness, reserved for us in a happy Immortality.

FINIS.

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